

# **An Litir Bheag**

**le Ruairidh MacIlleathain**

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 749 (which corresponds to Litir 1,053). Ruairidh can be contacted at [roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*I was telling you about a battle between the MacGregors and Colquhouns in Glen Fruin in 1603. The clan chief, Sir Humphrey Colquhoun of Luss, made sure that the two MacGregor merchants were dead on the gibbet. He put the lads' heads on posts near his house. That was horrifying to the Macgregors.*

*The head of the MacGregors in Glen Strae – Alasdair Dubh – decided to sort out the matter with Sir Humphrey. There was a meeting between the two men at the head of Glen Fruin. They agreed that each man would take a hundred clansmen with him.*

*Neither man was honest. Alasdair Dubh took a hundred men with him. But his brother, Iain Dubh, had a hundred more down the road at Allt a' Chlèith. Sir Humphrey also had a hundred men. But he kept three hundred hidden behind a hill.*

*There was a host there watching the affair. Among them were students and their head from a university in Dumbarton.*

*Sir Humphrey spoke to Alasdair Dubh. Alasdair Dubh appeared to be satisfied.*

*On the road home, the three hundred Colquhoun soldiers attacked the MacGregors. The MacGregors ran to Allt a' Chlèith. On the far side of the burn, they*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun chath eadar na Griogaraich agus Clann a' Chombaich ann an Gleann Freòin ann an sia ceud deug 's a trì (1603). Rinn an ceann-cinnidh, Sir Umfra Mac a' Chombaich à Lus, cinnteach gun robh an dithis mharsantach Ghriogarach marbh air a' chroich. Chuir e cinn nan gillean air stuib faisg air an taigh aige. Bha sin tàmailteach do Chloinn 'ic Ghriogair.

Chuir ceann-cinnidh nan Griogarach ann an Gleann Sratha – Alasdair Dubh – roimhe a chùis a rèiteach le Sir Umfra. Bha coinneamh eadar an dithis aig ceann Ghlinn Freòin. Dh'aontaich iad gun toireadh gach duine ceud fear-cinnidh leis.

Cha robh duine seach duine aca onarach. Thug Alasdair Dubh ceud duine leis. Ach bha ceud eile aig a bhràthair, Iain Dubh, pìos beag shìos an rathad aig Allt a' Chlèith. Bha ceud duine aig Sir Umfra cuideachd. Ach chùm esan trì cheud am falach air cùl cnoc.

Bha slugh ann a bha a' coimhead a' ghnothaich. Nam measg, bha oileanaich agus an ceannard à oilthigh ann an Dùn Breatann.

Bhruidhinn Sir Umfra ri Alasdair Dubh. Bha coltas air Alasdair Dubh gun robh e sàsaichte.

Air an rathad air ais, thug na trì cheud saighdear aig Clann a' Chombaich ionnsaigh air na Griogaraich. Ruith na Griogaraich gu Allt a' Chlèith. Air taobh thall an uillt,

*turned, ready to fight. They controlled the two fords there.*

*When the Colquhouns reached the burn, they tried to get across. Iain Dubh's force arose from behind a hill where they were hiding. The Colquhouns fled to the hill but the MacGregors went ahead of them.*

*MacGregor bowmen fired from a crag above a pass. They killed many of the Luss soldiers. The pass is now called Bealach na Dunach 'the pass of the disaster'.*

*The Colquhouns fled again. The MacGregors followed them. Near the head of Glen Fruin, one of the MacLintocks killed Iain Dubh.*

*But the MacGregors continued. And they met a university group from Dumbarton. What did they do with them? I'll tell you in the next Litir.*

thionndaidh iad, deiseil airson sabaid. Bha smachd aca air an dà àth ann.

Nuair a ràinig Clann a' Chombaich an t-allt, dh'fheuch iad ri faighinn tarsainn. Dh'èirich feachd Iain Duibh bho air cùl a' chnuic far an robh iad am falach. Theich Clann a' Chombaich don mhonadh ach chaidh na Griogaraich air thoiseach orra.

Loisg fir-bhogha Ghriogarach bho chreag os cionn bealach. Mharbh iad tòrr de shaighdearan Luis. 'S e Bealach na Dunach 'the pass of the disaster' a tha air a' bhealach a-nise.

Theich Clann a' Chombaich a-rithist. Lean na Griogaraich orra. Faisg air ceann Ghlinn Freòin, mharbh fear de Chloinn GhillFhionntaig Iain Dubh.

Ach chùm na Griogaraich a dol. Agus thachair iad ris a' bhuidhinn oilthigh à Dùn Breatann. Dè rinn iad leotha? Innsidh mi dhuibh anns an ath Litir.